

61 Columbia Street
Brookline, Massachusetts
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December 9, 1974

Dear Dr. Lederberg,

I am writing to you in the hope of reviving an old mutual interest. You may remember that we corresponded in the spring of 1973 after Eric and Kay Kohler mentioned to you that I was working on medicine and genetics in Weimar and Nazi Germany. I completed my work in the form of a Harvard undergraduate thesis, but I have wanted to do more work in the history of genetics ever since that time.

I am still particularly interested in the process by which progress in the field of genetics influences social ideals and the growth of social reform movements. There has been so much public misuse and misunderstanding of the principles of genetics (particularly in Germany and America) in the past sixty or seventy years that the subject poses fascinating problems which I would very much enjoy exploring.

As you seemed to be concerned with these sorts of issues last year, I am hoping that you might consent to supervise me in some further work. I am now a first-year student at the Harvard Medical School, and first-year students are allowed to structure an "interim" period during the months of January and June, July, and August in any way that we choose. I have the opportunity to be in the Stanford area either during January or during the summer months, and the Harvard Curriculum Committee seems very willing to give me credit for a project in the history of genetics if I can assure them that I will have some supervision.

yes

If you will be at Stanford during any of these months and would be interested in helping me explore some of the relationships between the science of genetics and its "public image", I would be very grateful for your counsel. It need only involve a small amount of time on your part (as I know that you are very busy), for I anticipate spending most of my time working in the Stanford libraries. I am sure that I could work out a project which would be of interest to both of us, and it would be an exciting way for me to use my elective time.

January is fast approaching, and if that happens to be a convenient month for you, perhaps you could reply soon. But the summer months (any or all of them) are equally feasible for me, so my schedule is quite flexible. Should you be able to work with me, I can send you the proper form from the Harvard Medical School Curriculum Committee for your authorization.

Many thanks in advance for your kind attention. I hope to hear from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Robert J. Waldinger
Robert J. Waldinger

DEC 10 1974

OK - Sounds great!

*You should see Charles Rosenberg at
U/Penna Dept History [of Science] before
you leave east coast. I am
and an article (book?) by Kevin
Social Research 41(3) aut. '74.*